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SERVICE

USDA'S REPORT TO CONSUMERS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE · OFFICE OF INFORMATION · WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

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White House Conference on Natural Beauty. In calling the conference on Natural Beauty, held May 24-25, Washington, D. C., President Johnson expressed hope that it would help encourage State and local governments, institutions, and private citizens to produce new ideas and approaches for enhancing the beauty of America. The Department of Agriculture took part in the conference, since in its normal activities it reaches out to help beautify land wherever Americans live. Services of the Department touch on 3 out of every 4 acres in the U. S. that are privately owned; 186 million acres in the National Forests and Grasslands; and in cities and suburbs through research, conservation, and education. For example, with USDA help, Stamford, Conn., was able to convert a 30-acre swamp into a recreation-wildlife area (rather than a dump, as previously planned). For a summary of USDA's services, send a post card for "USDA Helps Beautify the American Countryside" to Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250. Additional Program Aid: "Community Improvement Through Beautification" (PA 660). Single copies free, send post card to same address.

Schools, Bigger Backyards. The trend continues towards larger sites for schools. This offers new opportunity for outdoor education, as well as a demand for conservation assistance, notes the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Instead of bussing children to parks and nature centers some schools feature outdoor laboratories on their own grounds. School officials are buying larger sites each year. In the case of 31 schools, entrants in a school building architectural exhibit, sites ranged from 50 to 100 acres. The larger sites lend themselves to the development of areas for conservation education. Department soil specialists work with schools in preparing plans. These are based on soil surveys and other information regularly utilized by farmers. The 80-acre site of the Gwinn Public School, Michigan, is a good example of how a conservation plan was adapted to a school's needs. It includes a woodland with trails (serving as a day camp location), a wildlife area, with a pond for aquatic life study.



FOOD

Low Pesticide Residues in Food. Latest market basket studies by the Food and Drug Administration indicate that the amounts of pesticide residues in the American food supply are insignificant from a health standpoint. Commenting on these important studies, Dr. Nyle C. Brady, USDA's Director of Science and Education, pointed out that pesticide levels found in test samples collected from grocery stores in three major cities were generally less than one percent of the safe legal tolerance. Many of the most commonly used pesticides were not found at all. Use of pesticides to control agricultural pests assures us of an abundant supply of high quality food at reasonable cost, Dr. Brady said. The FDA findings, he noted, show that the careful, efficient use of pest control chemicals is fully consistent with the production of wholesome food products. He urged farmers, homeowners, gardeners, and other users to read the pesticide container label before use and follow all directions for proper application, safe handling, and storage.

Plentiful Foods in June. Milk and dairy products, fresh summer vegetables, and broilers-fryers are in abundant supply this June. You might plan meals around these foods, which are likely to be specially priced, says the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

HOME HINTS

Efficient Cooling-Pick the Right Size Fan. With summer here many of us will begin shopping for a fan to cool the house. Be wise; get a fan big enough for the job. Here's the way you do it, according to U. S. Department of Agriculture engineers. 1. Find the volume of the area you want to cool. Multiply the length of the rooms by the width; then multiply by the height. 2. If you live in the southern part of the country, multiply the volume by 1.5. This will give you minimum cubic feet per minute (C.F.M.) required. If you live in the northern states, your minimum C.F.M. requirement will be the same as the volume you want cooled. 3. Pick a fan that has a C.F.M. rating larger than your C.F.M. requirement--a larger rating will allow for slight differences in efficiency and testing procedures. Normally, a 1/3 horsepower, 36-inch attic fan will provide 40 air changes per hour for the average 3-bedroom house. This is enough ventilation in the northern states. Such a fan will cost from \$60 up. Another cooling hint: Make sure the house is insulated; and keep direct sunlight out with shades.

Pick Pesticides For Right Use. For safety's sake, you should be sure you're buying the right pesticide for the purpose and place you have in mind, says the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Don't buy when you're in such a hurry you don't take time to read the label. Here's just one example: A surface spray intended to kill insects which crawl shouldn't be used as a spray in the air for insects which fly. Use it only on baseboards or places where the crawling insects will come in contact with it. And before you buy any pesticide to use inside the house, be sure the label says it's safe for use indoors.

CLOTHING

Mildew, How to Prevent-How to Remove. Warm, damp weather, floods in the mid-West, and closed houses all can mean mildew. Mildew is caused by molds that grow on anything from which they can get enough food. As molds grow, they cause damage, often have a musty odor. To prevent mildew, get rid of dampness, says the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Remove the cause of the dampness (repair drainage, seal leaky basement walls), provide enough ventilation, get rid of musty odors, give some articles and surfaces special care (keep fabrics dry, protect with mildew-resistant finishes, clean before storing). To remove mildew already present, use lemon juice and salt solution, perborate bleach or chlorine bleach on fabrics, use talcum powder in books. For a free copy of "How to Prevent and Remove Mildew"(H.G. 68) send a post card to Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250.

GARDENING

Beetles Are Back. Japanese beetles cause widespread damage to garden and farm crops, despite millions of dollars the public spends to combat them. The spread of the beetle is often unintentional. Homeowners, farmers, and commercial shippers who move shrubs, plants, even soil, outside of infested areas, can give the beetle a new lease on life. The Department of Agriculture points out that State and Federal quarantines to prevent further spread of the destructive pest now cover an area extending from Atlanta, Ga., to Bangor, Me., and New York City to South Bend, Ind. Quarantine regulations require soil or nursery stock from infested areas to be treated, and marked by a certificate attached to the shipment. The Department urges public cooperation in observing the quarantine.

Community Action Halts Beetles. Civic associations and garden clubs have effectively waged their own war on the Japanese beetle. But it takes community action to make it successful. Communities such as Carrollton, Md., and Springfield, Va., have helped make it work through a "milky spore disease program." Developed by U. S. Department of Agriculture scientists, the milky spore method destroys beetle grubs--and only grubs. A harmless white powder is applied to the soil in small quantity. Application is simple. The powder may be purchased from garden supply stores, or suppliers. Commercial firms also may be contracted. Need more information? Contact your County Agricultural Agent.

GENERAL INTEREST

Summer Farm Jobs for High School Boys. With the end of the "bracero" program, high school boys can work this summer in harvest fields or fruit groves. Teams of boys will be organized in participating high schools, with a supervisor for each squad of 20 to 31 boys. Seventeen thousand high schools in 18 states which need agricultural workers are being contacted. It will give the boys a chance to earn several hundred dollars, get plenty of fresh air, and do work that will build them up. Boys are needed in Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Louisiana, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Texas, Utah, Wisconsin, Wyoming. Minimum wage will be from \$1.15 to \$1.40. Three meals a day will cost \$2.25. Boys should contact their high school athletic director in these states, or write to Department of Labor, Farm Labor Service, Washington, D. C.

Six Pesticides Seized by USDA. Six pesticides have been seized by U. S. Marshals, following charges by the U. S. Department of Agriculture that the products violated the USDA-administered Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act. The Act protects the public from losses and possible personal injury through faulty, misbranded, or adulterated products. Three of the products were not registered. They are: Rescue Spray Protection Against Attack By Persons Or Animals; Pennant Outdoor Repellent For Garden Use; Pennant Indoor Repellent For Home Use. Two others were not registered and were misbranded, USDA said. Procon Attack Snail And Slug Pellets label did not bear proper ingredient statement and contained arsenic without showing total or percentages. M-D 16 Technical Concentrate was misbranded because it did not contain an ingredient statement nor directions for use. Doke Bacteriostatic Odor Killer, was registered, but misbranded. Circulars claimed the product would kill germs (even *Staphylococcus aureus*). USDA said the product would not kill all germs, and would not disinfect surfaces, places, and articles named in the circular.

Flood and Tornado Victims Get USDA Aid. More than 2-1/2 million pounds of Department of Agriculture food has been made available in disaster-hit areas, and tons of USDA-donated food are still being used to feed thousands of flood and tornado victims. The food is being supplied from Government-owned stocks in schools, needy family distribution centers, and other warehouses. Heavy demand for USDA-donated foods is still evident in sections of Iowa and Minnesota, to feed people displaced by last month's floods. Many flood victims will be out of their homes for some time. Some 4,000 farmers are also being helped to remove debris from fields, streams, and drainage ditches, and to repair and replace fences. Feed is being distributed for flood-stranded livestock and emergency credit is available to maintain farming operations, where regular credit is not available.

Central Kitchens Bring School Lunch to Older City Schools. Nearly three million pupils in big-city schools cannot get school lunches. Central preparation can bring the School Lunch program to many old urban schools, where installation of a kitchen and lunchroom is not feasible, according to a recent U. S. Department of Agriculture report. The report provides guidelines to help school administrators select facilities and equipment needed to provide the best form of lunch for local conditions--plate lunch, tray pack lunch, soup and sandwich lunch, or packaged lunch. The Department provides cash and donated foods to help public and private schools serve adequate lunches, it also requires schools taking part to serve the lunches without cost or at a reduced cost to needy children. But many of the schools in low-income areas where lunches are needed most do not have facilities to provide them. And others have so many children unable to pay that they still cannot afford to take part in the program, even though the USDA has made progress by authorizing States to reimburse such schools at a higher than average rate, within the limits of Federal funds available. To avoid raising lunch prices, public or private agencies may assume part of the cost of lunches provided free or at reduced cost.

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